

Open Enough? Choices and Consequences When Transitioning from Closed to Open Resources and Courses



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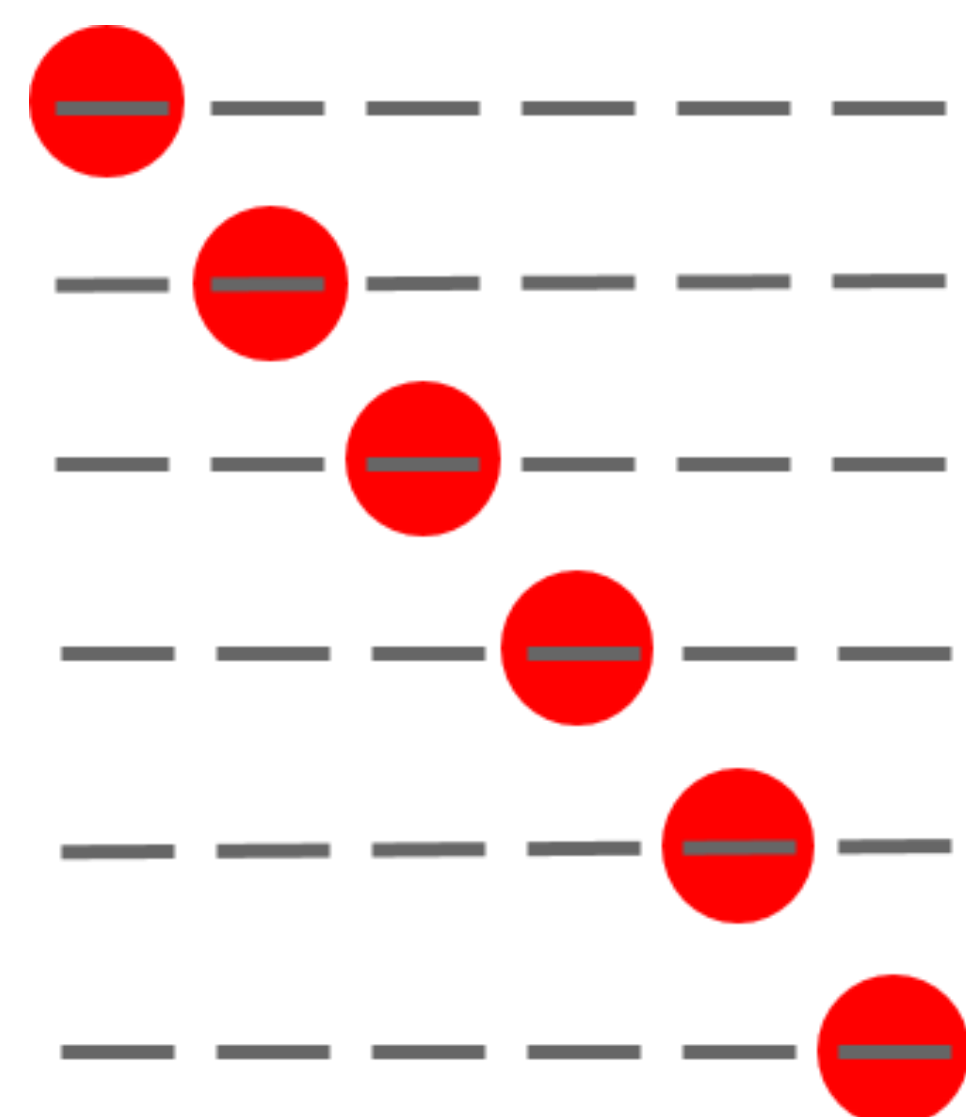
Purpose

Our research aims explicate the choices and factors influencing those decisions faced by OER creators and builds on our previous work exploring choices and consequences in OER creation.

Literature / Background

- **Open Educational Resources (OER)** are “digitized materials offered freely and openly for educators, students and self-learners to use and reuse for teaching, learning and research” (OECD, 2007).
- Growing interest in OER since MIT launched its Open Courseware platform in 2001.
- OER offer many benefits:
 - Lower student costs
 - Pedagogical advantages
 - Enhanced university reputations
 - Potential profit streams for university bookstores
- OER suffer from several shortcomings such as limited awareness and varying degrees of institutional support.
- Educators developing OER face many decision making challenges.
- OER reusability is also a common concern raised by educators.

Original Six-Point Scale For Measuring Openness



✓ Useful for providing insights into choices creators face.

X Orders choices in a prescriptive manner.

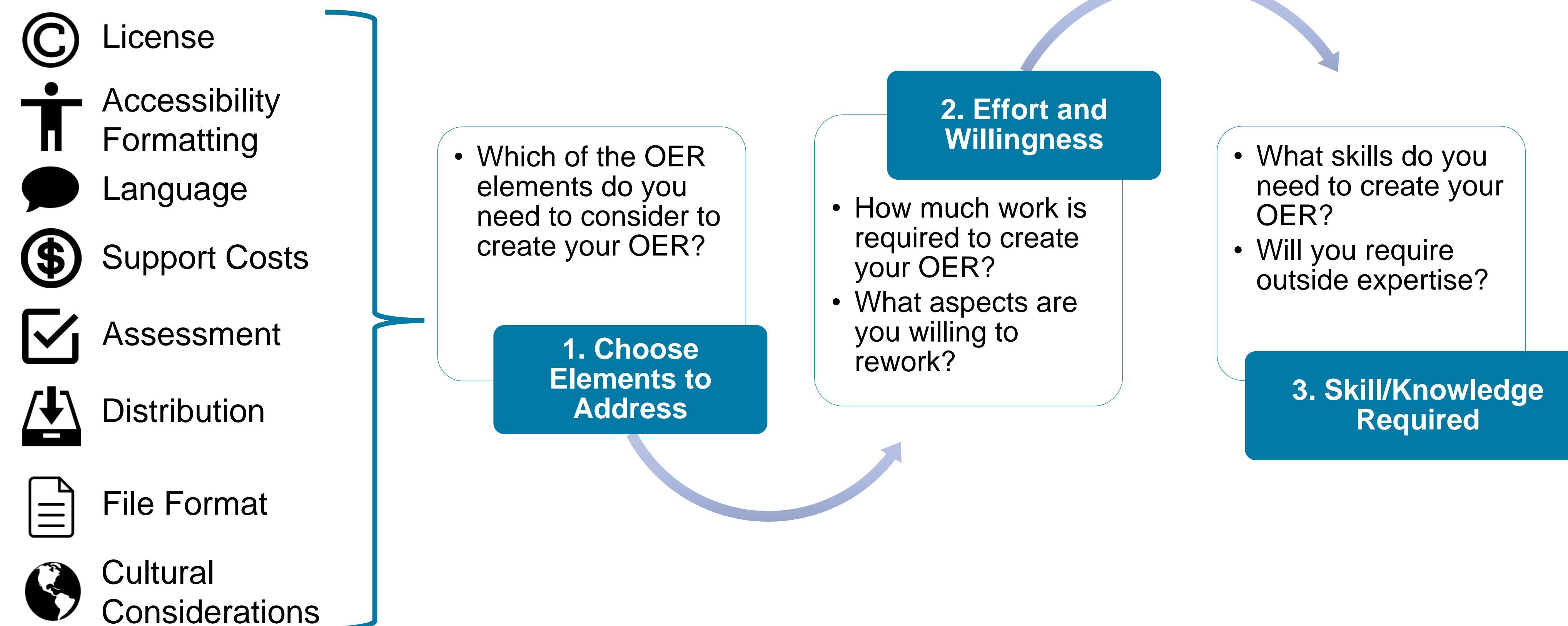
X Only captures a small subset of OER and does not suite other OER types.

Examples of Potential Open Resources

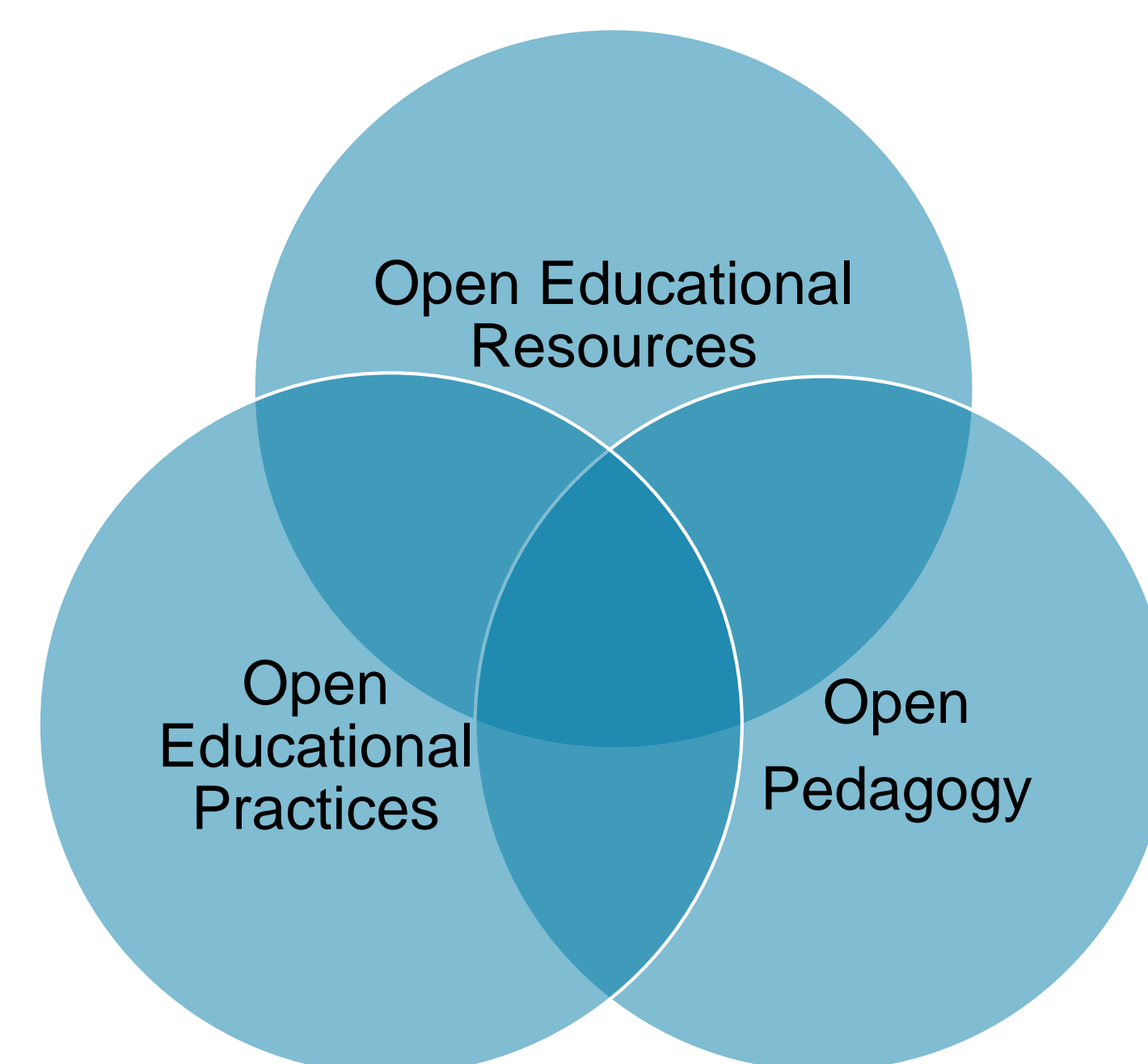
Full Courses	Textbooks	Audio & Video Lectures	Lesson Plans	Assignments	Assessments
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Decision Making Process for Transitioning from Closed to Open Resources



Conflated Definitions of Openness



- General **lack of consensus** on what “openness” actually means.
- Pomerantz and Peek identify over **50 types of “open” content** using a range of approaches to openness.
- OER **Open Educational Practices (OEP)** and **Open Pedagogy (OP)** are often used interchangeably despite important differences.

Challenges and Pedagogical Implications



“Cost factor” is not relevant to **discrete resources**.



The “File Format” factor for videos is vague on what is a more/less editable format.



“Most open” resources require learners to **self-assess** their progress, thereby limiting possible **assessment mechanisms** to multiple choice, true/false, or matching.

Advice for Educators

- Licensing considerations are paramount.
- Become familiar with **Creative Commons** licensing and collaborate with local **Copyright Officers/Librarians** is critical.
- Know your own skills, abilities and limitations.
- You may not be able, or need, to maximize openness for all factors.
- The **File Format** and **Distribution** elements require an active choice to introduce closedness or openness.
- Creating OERs from scratch is not always necessary.

Future Research

- Evaluating a variety of OER types and cases using an **empirical system**.
- As the nuances of OER types are discovered, a **factor list and scales** could be generated for each OER type.

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